

Nomination for an Assistant Secretary of the Department of Education

December 20, 1993

The President announced today that he intends to nominate Rodney A. McCowan to be the Assistant Secretary of Education for the Office of Human Resources and Administration. Mr. McCowan has been serving as Chief of Staff to Deputy Secretary of Education Madeleine Kunin. As Assistant Secretary, he will oversee the Department's administrative functions, including human resources, information systems, Government reinvention initiatives, and labor-management relations.

"Rodney McCowan is an experienced manager who has done an excellent job at the Department of Education since the beginning of this administration," said the President. "I hope that he will continue to do well in his new capacity."

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Pan Am Flight 103 Memorial in Arlington, Virginia

December 21, 1993

Thank you very much. Thank you. I believe, ladies and gentlemen, before you sit we should give a standing ovation to Jane for all the work that she has done here. [Applause] Thank you very much, Senator and Mrs. Kennedy, Senator Lautenberg, General Reno, and most importantly, the families, friends, and supporters of Pan Am 103.

On this day, 5 years ago, Pan American flight 103 was torn from the sky over the hills of Lockerbie, Scotland. Today we assemble in solemn remembrance to dedicate a simple monument to the victims of a savage act of terrorism. Here there will soon stand a cairn, the traditional Scottish marker for the resting place of the dead, built of 270 stones to memorialize 259 passengers and crew and the 11 villagers below whose lives were stolen without warning. Each tells the story of a life wrongfully cut short.

Like so many of you here today, these granite stones have traveled a long way, carved from a quarry in Lockerbie and donated to the families of those who were murdered. These rose-red stones are now given to the Nation to stand here among so many silent markers of our Nation's sacrifice.

There were on that day 189 Americans, including 25 members of our Armed Forces aboard Pan Am 103. We honor them. This memorial will serve as lasting testament to the innocent who died, to the grieving who survive them, to the brave who found in tragedy the strength and the persistence to ensure that their children, their parents, their brothers and sisters would not be forgotten.

I know this season must be especially difficult for all of you. I know you still see their faces and hear their voices and feel their absence, and nothing the rest of us can do can erase that loss. But I say to you today that our Nation will never stop pursuing justice against those who caused it, for the attack on Pan Am 103 was an attack not only on the individuals from 21 nations who were aboard the aircraft, it was an attack on America.

Our creed of freedom and opportunity is not a mere abstraction and neither are its enemies. Indeed, the states that sponsor terrorism know that the American idea is a mortal threat to their illegitimate and repressive authority. They know, too, that history, the rising tide of democracy seen everywhere in the world, is turning against them. And so with terrorism and any other means at their disposal, they lash back. We saw it in Pan Am 103. We saw it at the World Trade Center. We saw it in an attempt to assassinate former President Bush. These outlaws seek to legitimize their voice through violence, to advance their agenda through threats, to cripple our daily lives through fear. My friends, you and the efforts you have made are proof that they fundamentally misunderstand the character of America.

Just a few moments ago, I had the opportunity to meet with some representatives of the families of Pan Am 103. It was clear to me as never before that the brutality of their crime only fortified your determination, and

I can tell you it only fortifies the determination of your Nation and its Government. That is why we remain determined to see that those who murdered those who were aboard Pan Am 103 are brought to justice, why we have demanded the surrender of the two Libyans indicted for this vicious offense, why we have pushed for and secured tougher international sanctions against Libya, and why we will not rest until the case is closed.

As we break ground, let us vow again that we will do all we can to protect our people. And let us draw renewed strength from the lives of the individuals in whose memories we come to honor.

I want to read to you in closing the words of Georgia Nucci, who lost her son over Lockerbie and later assembled an extraordinary book about the lives of each of the victims. As she returned from Scotland, she wrote the following: "Out of the ashes of this disaster came a torrent of love and friendship and help freely given from a whole community that was itself a victim."

Today is the shortest day of the year. But the winter solstice is also a turning point from which the light begins to return. While this season and this day for you and for all Americans are blackened by the agony of senseless loss, I pray that each of your lives will be brightened in some measure by the monument we dedicate here.

Let us grieve for those who fell from the firmament, and those who lay below, on that winter day still frozen so clearly in your memory. The Bible says: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." As each stone is set in this cairn, may your wounds set and heal as well. And as long as this monument shall stand, may you find comfort in the knowledge that your Nation stands behind you.

I ask you now to join me in a moment of silent prayer.

I'd like now to ask Constable George Esson and Eleanor and Nicky Bright to join Jane Schultz down here for the groundbreaking ceremony.

George Esson; and Eleanor and Nicky Bright, family members of a Pan Am flight 103 victim.

Remarks Honoring UNICEF Health Heroes

December 21, 1993

Thank you. Thank you very much, Jim. Hillary and I are delighted to have you and so many of your friends from around America here today for the presentation of this report. We especially appreciate the presence here—I see Senator Leahy, Senator Sarbanes, and Congressman Obey. I don't know if Senator Dole and Congressman Porter are here, but I think they were coming. I'm delighted to see from the administration, Tim Wirth from the State Department; Secretary Shalala from HHS; our United Nations Ambassador, Madeleine Albright; our AID Administrator, Brian Atwood; and the Surgeon General, Dr. Joycelyn Elders. There are many other distinguished people here, but most of all I'm glad to see the children here. For after all, we're here to celebrate a season filled with the joy of children and to remind ourselves of much of the work still to be done.

James Agee once wrote, "In every child who is born under no matter what circumstances, the potentiality of the human race is born again, and in him, too, our terrific responsibility toward human life, toward the utmost idea of goodness, the horror of error, and of God." We are here in part to note the outstanding work of the fine man who just spoke.

Jim Grant and UNICEF are among the best friends any child could have. UNICEF was the driving force behind the historic world summit for children 3 years ago when leaders of 150 nations met to define the goals for improving health and welfare of our children by the year 2000. Jim and UNICEF continue to see that all the rest of us do our part to make progress toward those goals.

Today, with the annual State of the World's Children Report, UNICEF lays down another marker for the rest of us. The U.S. Agency for International Development also releases its own report on child survival.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:23 a.m. at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Jane Schultz, executive vice president, Victims of Pan Am Flight 103; Chief Constable